

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing amendments to the specification prior to further examination. No new matter has been introduced. Acceptance is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank Examiner Albertalli for a telephonic interview on July 12, 2005. In that interview, the Examiner agreed that Monaco et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,314,402) ("Monaco") do not disclose prioritizing responses according to predetermined rules other than the order in which responses are added to the prioritized queue. The Examiner stated that claim amendments including these distinguishing features of Applicants' invention would at least overcome the 103(a) Rejection based on Monaco.

35 U.S.C. 103(a) Rejection

Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over a Claassen (U.S. Patent No. 6,647,363), in view of Monaco, and further in view of Surace et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,334,103) ("Surace").

Monaco provides a mechanism for maintaining a queue of prompts or responses. The prompts are "added one at a time" in the queue of prompts and then the queue of prompts are played back sequentially when a playback method is called (col. 10, lines 32-37).

In the present invention, a turn manager 72 gives priority to different responses in the speak queue 74 based on predefined priority rules (specification, page 18, lines 18-27). Unlike Monaco and the other references cited above, Applicants provide a speak queue 74 that maintains a prioritized list of responses 76 (e.g., 76-1, 76-2, 76-3) prioritized according to predefined rules other than the order in which the responses are added to the queue (Fig. 4 and specification, page 14, lines 25-26). Base Claims 1, 7, 13, 19 and 20 have been amended to include these distinguishing features of Applicants' invention. As a result, Claassen, Monaco, and Surace alone or in any combination do not teach, suggest or otherwise make obvious each and every limitation of base Claims 1, 7, 13, 19 and 20 ("wherein the responses in the prioritized queue are prioritized according to predefined rules other than the order in which the responses").

are added to the prioritized queue”). Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of base Claims 1, 7, 13, 19 and 20 be withdrawn.


Since Claims 2-6, 8-12, and 14-18 depend from now amended base Claims 1, 7, and 13, respectively, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these dependent claims be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims (Claims 1-20) are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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